

What Is Claimed Is:

1. A reproduction apparatus which operates with a battery for reproducing term-managed main data, comprising:

main data storage means for storing the term-managed main data;

term data storage means for storing term management data to be used for the term-management of the main data;

time counting means operating with the battery for counting time;

holding means for holding time information counted by said time counting means also when power is not supplied thereto from the battery; and

control means for controlling said holding means to hold the time information counted by said time counting means at a predetermined time.

2. A reproduction apparatus according to claim 1, wherein, when the supply of power from the battery of said reproduction apparatus is resumed after the supply of power from the battery is interrupted, said control means controls said time counting means to resume the time counting based on the time information held by said holding means.

3. A reproduction apparatus according to claim 1,

wherein said control means permits reproduction of the main data based on the term information stored in said term information storage means.

4. A reproduction apparatus according to claim 3, wherein the permission of reproduction of the main data is discriminated based on the term information stored in said term information storage means and the time information counted by said time counting means.

5. A reproduction apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said control means controls said holding means to hold the time information at a predetermined timing.

6. A reproduction apparatus according to claim 5, wherein the time information is held by said holding means after each predetermined interval of time.

7. A reproduction apparatus according to claim 5, wherein said control means controls said holding means to hold the time information when said reproduction apparatus enters a low power consumption mode.

8. A reproduction apparatus according to claim 7, further comprising operation means for being operated by a user, and wherein said reproduction apparatus enters the low power consumption mode in which the power supply to a predetermined circuit block or blocks is stopped when said operation means is not operated by the user for

a predetermined period of time.

9. A reproduction apparatus according to claim 8, wherein said time counting means continues the time counting with the power from the battery even when said reproduction apparatus is in the low power consumption mode, and said control means controls said holding means to hold the time information counted successively by said time counting means after each predetermined period of time while said reproduction apparatus is in the low power consumption mode.

10. A reproduction apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising connection means for allowing communication with a different apparatus, and wherein said control means adjusts, when said reproduction apparatus is connected to the different apparatus by said connection means, the time counting of said time counting means based on time information sent from the different apparatus to said reproduction apparatus.

11. A reproduction apparatus according to claim 10, wherein the adjustment of the time counting of said time counting means is performed when the time information of the different apparatus connected to said reproduction apparatus leads the time information counted by said time counting means.

12. A reproduction apparatus which operates with a battery for reproducing main data term-managed based on term management information, comprising:

time counting means operable only while power is supplied thereto from the battery for counting time to be used for the term management;

holding means for holding the time counted by said time counting means while power from the battery is not supplied to said time counting means; and

control means for controlling reproduction of the main data based on the term management information and the time information counted by said time counting means.

13. A reproduction apparatus according to claim 12, further comprising data accessing means for reading out the main data and the term management information from a recording medium on which the main data and the term management information are recorded.

14. A reproduction method for a reproduction apparatus which reproduces term-managed main data using a battery as a power supply, comprising the steps of:

reading, from a timer which operates with the power supply from the battery to count time and stops the time counting when the power is not supplied from the battery, time information to be used for the term management of

40120-246766

the main data and writing the time information into a nonvolatile memory which holds data even when the power is not supplied thereto from the battery; and  
setting the time information written in the nonvolatile memory to the timer when the power is supplied again after the power supply from the battery is interrupted.

15. A reproduction method according to claim 14, further comprising the step of discriminating, when a instruction to reproduce the term-managed main data is received, whether or not the reproduction should be permitted based on management data to be used for management of a reproduction term of the main data and the time counted by the timer.

16. A reproduction method according to claim 14, wherein the writing of the time information into the nonvolatile memory is performed when said reproduction apparatus enters a low power consumption mode.

17. A reproduction method according to claim 14, wherein the writing of the time information into the nonvolatile memory is performed after each predetermined interval of time.

18. A reproduction method according to claim 14, further comprising the steps of:

receiving time information sent from a different apparatus connected to said reproduction apparatus; and re-setting the timer based on the received time information.

19. A reproduction method according to claim 19, wherein the setting of the time information to the timer is performed when the time information received from the different apparatus leads the time produced by the timer.